



Ask the Career Coach

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Career Coach



Several companies I've worked for are no longer in business. How can I respond to a request for professional references?

-Jeff

References are a very important part of the hiring process and job candidates should expect to be required to provide them when they are being seriously considered by a prospective employer. Keeping in mind that references must be able to speak to your strengths as they pertain to job performance, references should be previous bosses, supervisors or co-workers who had authority over your position. Those with limited work experience may provide the names of instructors or teachers, coaches, etc. who can provide feedback regarding performance. When asking someone if they will provide a reference on your behalf, ask someone with whom you are likely to stay in contact. It's also helpful to request a letter of recommendation, which will provide a written reference for you to use in the future. Most importantly, be sure you ask permission to use someone's name as a professional reference, and only provide the names and contact information of those who readily offer to give you a positive reference.